

# THE BAPTIST Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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## Missionary aids Africa's untouchables

LUSAKA, Zambia (BP) — No one in the clinic's waiting room is smiling, except Anna Banda. She chats happily with people at the Circle of Hope clinic on the outskirts of Lusaka, Zambia.

There are few, if any, empty seats as they wait to be tested and treated for AIDS. One mother leaves the clinic carrying bottles of medication in one hand and an infant in her other arm. A trash can overflows with empty medication boxes people have discarded before leaving the facility.

Banda knows all too well the pain these people are feeling. Nearly six years ago, she was dying of AIDS. She shows a photograph of herself during her darkest days. In the picture, she is not smiling. She sits on a bed with her shoulders slumped, staring blankly into the camera. She appears frail, sad, and near death.

At that stage of the disease, many people die within days or months — maybe a year if they are fortunate. According to UNAIDS (Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS) statistics, AIDS claims nearly 4,000 lives in sub-Saharan Africa every day.

As Banda's immune system began to shut down, she often felt weak, nauseated, and unable to keep food down, on the edge of becoming another AIDS statistic. Then she began to take life-saving medication — ART (antiretroviral therapy) — and found encouragement at Circle of Hope clinic.

A doctor put her on a strict regimen of medication each morning and evening. Today, she appears to be the picture of health. She now works at the clinic, is studying to be a receptionist, and recently got married.

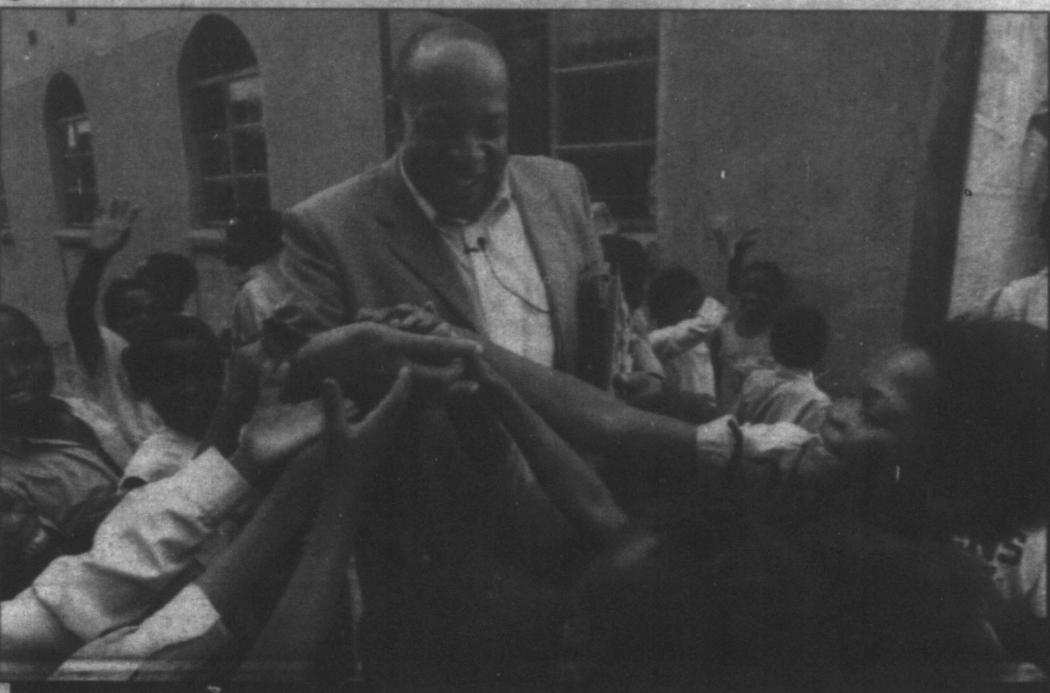
The medication Banda continues to take is not a cure but if taken regularly, it can get people back on their feet, and living and even enjoying life again. "Some don't believe it when I tell them I'm HIV-positive," she says. "They say, 'No, you're just trying to make us feel better.'"

AIDS continues to kill and infect thousands every day, but International Mission Board missionary Troy Lewis finally sees some progress. Lewis and his wife Tracey were appointed as missionaries in 2001. The couple from Dallas has two sons.

For the past decade, Lewis has led AIDS-related ministries in Zambia, joining forces with clinics like Circle of Hope. The Lottie Moon Christmas Offering and the Cooperative Program fund Southern Baptist missionaries' work overseas.

Having AIDS is no longer the automatic death sentence it once was, Lewis says. "We've seen people get up off their sick bed and walk," he says. "The greater availability of antiretroviral therapy is saving lives."

Lewis' work has branched out not only to clinics, but also into working



**BIG FRIEND** — School children in Lusaka, Zambia, crowd around missionary Troy Lewis of Southern Baptists' International Mission Board, whose primary focus involves ministering to those who have been impacted by the AIDS crisis. Lewis works with local churches, organizations, and schools to provide students with Christian support and access to True Love Waits, an abstinence-before-marriage program. (BP photo)

relationships with Baptist partners, local churches, ministries, and other non-governmental organizations to help get medication to people who need it.

Clinics once limited to HIV testing are now distributing medication and a chance at a new life.

These partnerships have helped bolster AIDS education and training for those seeking new ways to help. Lewis also promotes ministries like LifeWay Christian Resources' True Love Waits, which teaches abstinence before marriage along with biblical principles.

Many of the churches with which Lewis works help support more than 30,000 orphans and vulnerable children in six of Zambia's nine provinces. Lewis estimates they've also trained 1,700 caregivers to help those infected with AIDS. Some provide home-based care for those who are unable to travel to see a doctor.

One morning, Lewis and a group of local Christian caregivers duck through the small opening of a dying man's hut about an hour from the capital city. They are checking on Solomon, making sure he's taking his medication.

The man lies on a thin sheet on the floor of his hut. He used to be busy working in his fields. Today he is inside, closed off from his community.

Solomon appears to be entering the last stages of AIDS. His clothes swallow his thin frame. Sitting up is a slow, difficult process. Although the outcome for Solomon looks

grim, he recently began taking the ART medication to build up his immune system.

Though the number of deaths in sub-Saharan Africa has dropped slightly, people are still being infected and dying at a rapid rate and leaving behind thousands of orphaned children.

At times, keeping up with the latest AIDS statistics can be overwhelming, Lewis admits. "I used to have all of those [statistics] right on my finger tips," he says. "Then I stopped looking at it so much. It's just bad."

Some local Baptist churches have mobilized slowly during the past decade, but they are gaining traction, Lewis says. For some congregations, overcoming the negative image of AIDS still remains a challenge.

The church has not always been a safe place for people to reveal they have AIDS. "Sometimes... they did not have a church to lean back on," Lewis says. "There is a lot of stigma, a lot of discrimination."

Fighting the pandemic, he contends, boils down to finding hurting people and ministering to their needs like Jesus did. "Doing ministry that touches the soul" as Lewis puts it. "People were so open to Jesus' message... it got into their DNA that way."

Banda, with her smile and new life, prays that others will continue to find the happiness she has found. She also prays for a cure and remains confident in the Lord's power and love, adding, "My faith tells me that one day God is going to come through for those people who are providing the cure."

ARE WE  
THERE  
YET?

2010 Lottie Moon  
Christmas Offering®  
National Goal: \$175 Million

Week of Prayer for International Missions  
and International Mission Study  
November 28 - December 5

Our Church Call

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# Lengthy struggle leads to mission service

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Her words hit Seth Whitman (not his real name) like a hammer. The 37-year-old civil engineer was riveted by the stories he was hearing from a missionary who'd come to speak at Calvary Church in Winston-Salem, N.C.

The more she shared about how God was working in North Africa and the Middle East, the tighter God squeezed Seth's heart. "I just started to feel very convicted that... it was somewhere else He wanted us to plant our lives," Seth said.

What he didn't know was that God also was gripping the heart of his wife Amy (not her real name). For the first time, Amy heard stories about God appearing to Muslims in dreams and visions. The more the missionary shared, the more Amy wanted to go.

"I was very jealous that people were seeing God move in miraculous ways, and I was like, 'Lord, I want to see that.' ...and I just told Him right then, 'Lord, if You'll call Seth, I'll go.'"

The rest of the church service was a blur for Seth as he grappled with this seemingly out-of-nowhere impulse to be a missionary. When the altar call was given, inviting people who felt God may be calling them to missions to come down front, Seth did.

It was a moment for which Amy had spent the past 14 years praying. "I had been praying for Seth to be called to something our whole marriage... Not necessarily to missions or to preach; I just prayed that God would call him to follow Him and that we

would have a ministry together as a family," Amy said.

While Seth was at the altar, Amy quietly sat in a pew, asking God if He was calling them overseas. "When [Seth] finally came back to the pew, I could tell that he was overwhelmed with emotion, and I didn't dare speak to him because I knew he was just about to lose it..."

"That day was the beginning of a new Seth. He was broken and God began to change him."

With that brokenness came a lot of pain, and the next few days were rocky for Seth. When he told his dad he thought God was calling him to ministry in the Middle East, his dad was less than excited.

Seth had spent the past 16 years working for his father, helping run a manufacturing company. Now nearing retirement, Seth's father was ready to hand the company over to his son. If Seth answered God's call to the mission field, that would be impossible.

When Seth refused to drop the idea of going overseas, his father at one point became so upset he fired Seth — only to ask him back the following week.

"I think my dad feels like I'm throwing my career away," Seth said. "It's hard and it still is... [but] this is what God has asked me and I'm going to be obedient to that. God just made it where I could take my refuge in Him."

Seth had his own internal struggles as he came to grips with what God was asking. He didn't want to talk about what was happening in his life. He wanted to run from it, to argue it away.



**HEADED TO MISSION FIELD** — Like many Southern Baptist missionaries, Seth and Amy Whitman (not their real names) gave up their American Dream and are serving with their four children in North Africa and the Middle East. "God has asked us to plant our family there," Seth said. "If that's what He has purposed for us, then He has it purposed for all of our kids, too. It didn't catch Him by surprise that we have four wonderful children." (BP photo)

"I told God I am in a wonderful position here. I love my job... We have a great church, our family is planted here, we have friends, I do stuff with the Little League, we have a great house. We have everything."

"We both were calm," Amy said. "We didn't get excited, and we didn't run out and do anything crazy, we just got up every morning early and read our Bibles and we prayed."

By January 2009, eight months after the Whitmans first heard God's call, they knew without doubt that God wanted them overseas. "I can't really tell you [how it happened]," Seth said. "All I can really say is that the joy and contentment I had for where our life was. It just faded... It was like God scraped the desires that I had out of my heart and He put this in."

The Whitmans were "sprinting headlong" into the missionary application process with the International Mission Board when they hit a snag: selling their house. Nobody was buying, and it had to be sold before they could go. After missing an opportunity to be appointed in

September 2010, leadership at Calvary Church offered to manage the sale of the Whitmans' home so they wouldn't be delayed any longer.

"Calvary stepped in and said, 'If this is what you're feeling led to do... then we're willing to hold the rope for you and help you get there,'" Seth said. "To experience that type of commitment from leadership in your local body, there just really aren't any words for that."

International Mission Board trustees officially approved the Whitmans as Southern Baptist missionaries Nov. 10, together with 55 other candidates who were recognized at an appointment service at Calvary Church.

The Whitmans will leave for North Africa and the Middle East in spring 2011. They'll work as church planters, sharing the Gospel among a people with very few believers.

"We've heard about God doing amazing things in other parts of the world, and I just can't believe He's going to let us have a front-row seat to that," Seth said. "I just don't understand how I could deserve that."

## Looking back

### 10 years ago

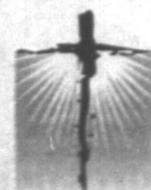
West Kemper Church, DeKalb, celebrates its sesquicentennial anniversary Dec. 3 with a history of the church being presented.

### 20 years ago

The mission needs of 1990 are just as crucial as the missions needs in the days of Lottie Moon, Southern Baptists' first single female missionary in 1873, according to Keith Parks, president of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

### 30 years ago

Bay Springs Church takes quick action in launching a special building fund drive to help provide the funds necessary to replace the men's dormitory destroyed by fire at Clarke College, Newton.



MISSISSIPPI  
BAPTISTS

## THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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No. 46



YOU CAN RESPOND  
RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (I have sinned.)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (I repent.)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (I believe in Jesus.)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with Him. (I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.)

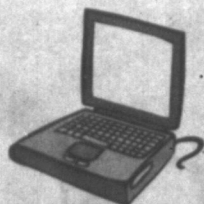
"But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name." (John 1:12)

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

## Prayer works

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Throughout this year's 40/40 Prayer Vigil, as individuals and churches prayed for spiritual revival and national renewal for 40 days and 40 hours, pastors across America have experienced the common theme of unity among their church staffs. The bi-annual prayer focus, an initiative of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) and the convention's North American Mission Board (NAMB), acknowledges the fact that "there is no human solution to the momentous issues facing individuals and families across our nation," said ERLC President Richard Land. Michael Cloer, pastor of Englewood Church in Rocky Mount, N.C., said his staff made a commitment to pray at least one hour a day in their individual offices and together as a staff twice a week during the 40-day vigil, which began in late September and concluded in early November. "[The 40/40 Prayer Vigil] has revolutionized our staff," Cloer said. "I believe it's impossible to get close to the Lord without getting close to His children. The vigil has brought us close together and it will be impossible to go back to the way we were." In his 39 years of ministry, Cloer said he has seen churches participate in numerous programs for periods of time before they eventually seem to fade away from lack of interest. Cloer wants to see his church continue to pray on a regular basis both individually and corporately so that the 40/40 Prayer Vigil does not turn into another church program. "The idea for the prayer vigil was born out of a burden at the ERLC for the spiritual health of individual Americans," Land said. "There is no question that our churches are in need of a truly spiritual revival, and our nation is in need of a great movement of God's Spirit."





## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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are subject to editing.

# The battle over 'Christmas'

Now really, is it  
going to break  
anyone's jaw to  
say, "Merry Christmas"  
at this time of year? To  
listen to Americans bick-  
er over the issue, one  
would surely think so.

The argument between  
Christians and secularists

over exactly  
what this spe-  
cial time of year should be called seems to annually grow  
louder and more obnoxious, with the secularists com-  
plaining that the phrase Merry Christmas offends them  
because they don't believe in Christ.

Retailers and advertisers, anxious about losing shop-  
pers during this most crucial time of the business year,  
have in some cases kowtowed to the small but vocal  
contingent of anti-Christmas individuals and groups.

American Atheists, founded by the late Madalyn  
Murray O'Hair and headquartered in Parsippany, N.J.,  
prefers "Winter Solstice" to Christmas. Somehow, "Merry  
Winter Solstice" just doesn't have the same ring. Try say-  
ing it ten times real fast, and you'll see for yourself.

To insult as many Christians during Christmas as  
possible this year on their limited budget, American  
Atheists has purchased billboard space near the  
entrance to Lincoln Tunnel in New York City. The bill-  
board depicts the Three Wise Men following the star to

Baby Jesus in a nativity setting. The billboard text reads, "You  
KNOW it's a myth. This season, celebrate REASON!"

The billboard is signed, "American Atheists. Reasonable since  
1963," and includes the group's e-mail address.

"We get blamed for a war on Christmas every year. This time  
we're actually going to pay attention to that. We're actually going  
to earn a little bit of that," said American Atheist president, David  
Silverman, in an interview with the CBS television network affil-  
iate (Channel 2) in New York City.

You KNOW it's a Myth  
This Season, Celebrate REASON!



American Atheists • Reasonable since 1963 • atheists.org

To be sure no one was  
left unoffended, Silver-  
man continued: "A lot  
of people in church, a  
lot of people in the  
mosque, a lot of people  
in the synagogue know  
they're praying to air...  
We're getting a lot of  
response from closeted  
atheists saying, 'Thank  
you for putting it up.'"

With the public discussion caused by such large-scale propa-  
ganda events and the publication of anti-religion books by such  
authors as Richard Dawkins and Christopher Hitchens, these folks  
believe they are on the verge of creating an "Atheist Awakening."

Just for our own enlightenment, we should ask every front-door  
greeter in every store we enter this Christmas season how they have  
been instructed to greet customers. Have they been told to avoid  
saying Merry Christmas? What other expressions suggestive of re-  
ligion have been prohibited (Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Ramadan, etc.)?

If the greeters are not sure of the store's policy, perhaps the  
store manager could be helpful.

With the country at war, the national economy in shambles, and  
WikiLeaks exposing government secrets that will cause harm to this  
country for a century, a visitor from another planet might be given  
to wonder about all the national argument over the word Christmas.

Here's one explanation: Christmas invariably makes many people  
think of Christ. Thinking of Christ invariably makes many people  
pause to ponder their salvation and if not that, at least the way they  
are living their lives. Lots of people don't like to do that, because none  
of us are comfortable contemplating our own sinful ways before God.

Therefore, we try to remove all references dealing with any-  
thing that would keep us from living our lives as we please. Out  
with Christmas! Out with Christ! Up with Holiday Season! Up  
with Winter Solstice! Up with anything that frees us from our  
spiritual moorings and makes us feel better about ourselves!

What a sad, self-centered state of affairs. Merry Christmas to  
you, and may it always be so.

## GUEST OPINION:



### Why I'm grateful? Let's see ...

By Erich Bridges  
Richmond, Va.

"He was serving the Lord to  
reach people who were  
unreached with the Gospel."

Finck, from Virginia, died  
Aug. 9 in a car accident dur-  
ing his third trip to Zambia,  
where he was working with  
other volunteers to lead a  
Bible conference and minister  
to young people. "He was  
very passionate about  
Zambia," said the director of  
missions at Finck's church.

• The 60 retiring IMB mis-  
sionaries honored in May for  
1,730 combined years of mis-  
sion service. Don and Edith  
Kennedy, for example, worked  
among university students in  
Mexico for 31 years. Hundreds  
of young Christians they men-  
tored now serve as church  
leaders in Mexico and mis-  
sionaries around the world.

"Change the university  
and you change the world,"  
Don said.

• The more than 200 new  
IMB missionaries appointed  
this year, including Michael

Kim (not his real name) who  
grew up in South Korea. As the  
eldest son, he held the role of  
family priest, responsible for  
leading ancestor worship ritu-  
als. He became a Christian  
believer at age 16, the first in 38  
generations of his family.

His enraged parents beat  
him, threatened to disown  
him, and threw his Bibles into  
the fire. Kim eventually  
smuggled a Bible into his  
bedroom and read it while  
hiding under the sheets. Now  
an American, he plans to  
return to Asia to tell other  
hungry souls about Christ.

"In order for me to hear the  
Gospel, there was a long flow  
of blood, sweat and tears of  
Western missionaries to  
Korea," Kim said when he was  
appointed earlier this year. "As  
a debtor of the Gospel, I am ...  
heading to Southeast Asia to  
share the Good News of Jesus."

• Doris Kelley, colleague,  
friend and substitute mom to  
IMB communication staff mem-

bers for the past 48 — count 'em,  
48 — years. In the days before  
personal computers and e-mail,  
she typed our edited news and  
feature stories into a hulking  
teletype machine to send to  
Baptist Press in Nashville.

Many reporters got to  
know her during her more  
than 25 years of service in  
the newsrooms of annual  
Southern Baptist Convention  
meetings. She rarely missed  
a day of work, always greet-  
ed people with a smile,  
watched over her co-workers  
with love, and took care of  
business without complaint.

She retires in December.  
Without servants like Doris,  
many churches and ministries  
would quickly collapse. I hope  
we can make it without her; I'm  
not looking forward to trying.

Someone reminded me  
recently that God's grace is His  
unmerited favor toward us.  
We sinners deserve judgment,  
but we receive the riches of His  
goodness and mercy at Christ's  
expense. We also receive the  
great gift of people who model  
for us what it means to live in  
gratitude to God by loving and  
serving Him. Examples are all  
around us.

We, too, can live in gratitude  
to Him — by modeling that  
kind of love for others.

Editor's note: Bridges is a  
global correspondent for IMB.  
His commentary appears cour-  
tesy of Baptist Press.



What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

# HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

December 2, 2010

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.



July 13-16, 2011  
Orlando, FL

7th grade girls - college age young women

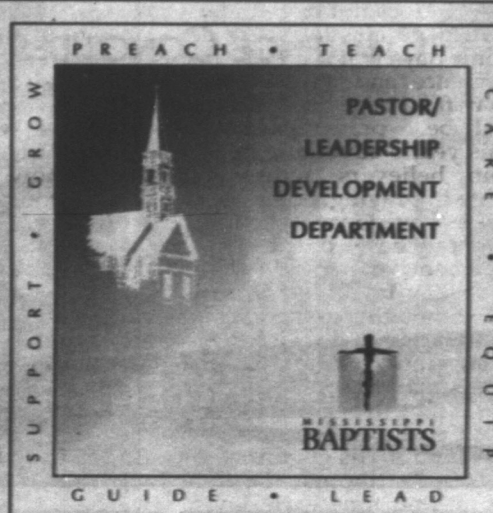


- Experience an intense and fun four-day focus on missions with girls from all over the world who have a similar heart for God and missions!
- Personally interact with missionaries.
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For more info contact MS WMU  
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## Miss. Travel and Hotel Package

\$700  
Covers:  
• Blume registration  
• travel  
• lodging  
• Disney pass  
1st payment due Dec 1, 2010



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Contact us to receive reminders from the Pastor/Leadership Development Department about pastor/leadership events or to change your e-mail address listed with us.

Encourage an MK with a birthday card!



2/2/07

**MISS ALISSIA WORTHY**  
Parents: Charlie & Shannon  
European Peoples

2/16/01

**MR. HADDON BLEDSOE**  
Parents: David & Laurie  
American Peoples

2/24/00

**MR. NATHAN PEACOCK**  
Parents: Kevin & Brenda  
European Peoples

FOR SECURITY, cards will be forwarded.  
Please send all to: Child's name, Parent's name,  
MBCB wMu MK Birthdays,  
PO Box 530, Jackson MS 39205

PLEASE NOTE: Church members may send a package of cards together; cards do not have to be sent individually to the wMu.



## 2011 CAMP GARAYWA

Registration begins Jan. 3

\$155 per camper

Camp is an incredible place where campers can meet new friends, explore other cultures, interact with missionaries, and experience the great outdoors. We learn more about God and His purpose for our lives. Garaywa is owned and operated by MS WMU and is located in Clinton, Miss.

### SUMMER SCHEDULE

June 6-10	Missions Camp for Girls
June 13-17	Missions Camp for Girls
June 20-24	Missions Camp for Girls
June 27-July 1	Missions Camp for Girls/Students
July 4-8	Missions Camp for Girls/Students
July 11-15	Missions Camp for Girls
July 18-22	Missions Camp for Girls
July 25-29	Missions Camp for Girls

**GIRLS** are those having completed grades 3-6  
**STUDENTS** are those having completed grades 7-12.



Register online: Garaywa.org. For more information: 601-292-3316.



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ECS BLLR YKX VH NSU-  
VHCSR LPE LA ECS  
SKUEC; KXR ECSUS VH  
XLXS PNUVBCE KYLXB  
YSX; ECSM KDD DVS VX  
IKVE ALU FDLRL; ECSM  
CPXE SOSUM YKX CVH  
FULECSU IVEC K XSE.

YVTKC HSOSX: EIL

Clue: Y = M

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Daniel Six: Four

## LETTERS TO GOD

Recently, a movie came out that was entitled, Letters to God. Though I did not see the movie, I read some of the reviews and the storyline will move your heart. This is not a movie review, but a request of you. Thousands of you have already made a commitment to join a great army across Mississippi who will be praying every day in 2011 to cover our state in prayer.

I want to challenge you to make your plans, preparations, and the commitment to write a letter to God each day. It does not have to be a four-page epistle. There are some days that it may be one sentence and other days it may fill a page. In essence, it will be a prayer journal of this year's adventure as you join believers across our state in praying. Some bookstores have journals that you can purchase, but a simple notebook or pad will do as each day in 2011, you write your thoughts to the Father.

In fact, you do not have to wait until January 1. The Christmas Season would be a great time to begin to express your praise and appreciation to Him for His goodness. As you walk through the holidays, find time each day to express your thoughts and feelings for His goodness and His amazing love poured out to us in sending Jesus. Then launch into the New Year with a pattern already begun.

It will be your thoughts, your feelings, and your prayers. Jot it down just for your record. Some of you will be blessed and amazed while others of you will experience a journey of discovery that you had never thought about before. While it will take a little time, some reflection, and personal commitment, as time moves along you probably will look back and see a great burden that God lifted, a dilemma He solved, a relationship He strengthened, and an intimacy with Him that was enhanced.

When you stop and think about it, letters are vitally important to us and, to be

more specific, letters from God are important to us. When you look at your Bibles and find the 66 books, among them are wonderful letters that God Himself has penned to you and to me. Now, thousands of years later, you can pick up one of those letters and begin to read and suddenly the wonder of God's truth and the power of His promises will penetrate your heart, give you wisdom, show you the way, and encourage your walk with Him.

As you walk through the cold, maybe dreary, possibly even snowy days of January and February and write your letters to God, you might be amazed by the time you get to the Fourth of July to look back and see what you may have forgotten about what God did and how He is blessing your life. Where would we be and what would we have missed if God had not written letters to us? It is hard to imagine, isn't it? What great strength we find in God's truth from the letter to the Philippians. "I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13). From the letter to the Romans, we have the great challenge that is so often before us, "To present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, and acceptable unto God which would be our reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1). There is the exclamation point in the letter to the Corinthians that says, "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through

our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Cor. 15:57). On and on the blessings flow from the letters He wrote to us.

These letters can be meaningful to you and can be meaningful to Him, so plan to be a part of writing at least 365 letters to God. Now, I would point out to you that these are from you to Him and there will not be any need for grammatical editing or even a spell check. Bigger things are at stake, for the changes, the corrections, and the connectedness is far above any of those kinds of problems.

There will develop maybe in a deeper, wider, stronger, higher way than ever before a connectedness with God.

One additional thought is that I hope some of you will feel led to share the blessings that come from your prayer letters. As you see the hand of God at work in your life, share it with others. One of the ways that you can do that is to go to the Mississippi Baptist Convention prayer website - [www.mbc.org/prayer](http://www.mbc.org/prayer) and click on the Letters to God icon. You will find a place where you can respond and fill in the space that begins Dear God. If you wish, it can be anonymous or you can share your name. I pray that God will richly bless your life as you join in this wonderful journey and great experience of Covering Mississippi in Prayer.

The author can be contacted at [jfutral@mbcb.org](mailto:jfutral@mbcb.org).



## Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

## MID SOUTH MEN'S BIBLE CONFERENCE

"As iron sharpens iron,  
so one man sharpens  
another"  
Proverbs 27:17  
(NIV)

February 25 - 26, 2011

Location: Faith Baptist Church | Bartlett, TN | Registration: [www.myfaithbaptist.org](http://www.myfaithbaptist.org)



### Registration Information

The conference cost is \$30 per person. This fee includes the conference and lunch. Special conference rates are available at area hotels. See the back of this form for more information. The deadline for conference registration is February 18, 2011.

Please register \_\_\_\_\_ persons at \$30 per person.  
(Please attach a list of the names of men who will be attending.)

Enclosed is my check in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_ for the non-refundable registration fees.  
(Make checks payable to Faith Baptist Church.)

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Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please Mail Registration Form To: Faith Baptist Church • 3755 N Germantown Rd • Bartlett, TN 38133

FEBRUARY 25-26  
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**MAGNOLIA BAPTIST CHURCH IN** Laurel MS is looking for a Bi Vocational Minister of Music. Please send resume to: Magnolia Baptist Church, 1040 Wansley Rd., Laurel MS 39440



## 2011 BAPTIST DOCTRINE PREVIEW

*Compelled by Love:*  
A Journey to Missional Living  
**Doctrine Preview Brunch**  
9 a.m. until noon



Lead by  
**DR. RONALD MEEKS**  
Professor of Bible, Blue Mountain College

Monday, January 17, 2011  
**Midway Baptist Church**  
Meridian, MS 39307

Monday, January 24, 2011  
**Rankin Baptist Association**  
Pearl, MS 39208



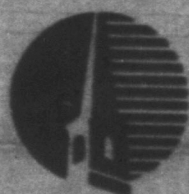
**Cost: \$15**  
Preregistration  
requested

Preregister with [dbrashier@mbcb.org](mailto:dbrashier@mbcb.org)  
or 1-800-748-1651 or 601-292-3287

## TRANSITIONAL PASTOR TRAINING

February 7-9

Cost: \$125



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Tupelo

**Early Bird Special: \$99 (by December 31, 2010)**

Cost includes: materials, conference fees, Monday supper,  
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Training begins at 1 p.m. on February 7 and ends  
at 3 p.m. on February 9

Contact: Church-Minister Relations – Bruce Cappleman  
at [bcappleman@mbcb.org](mailto:bcappleman@mbcb.org) or Pam May at [mpmay@mbcb.org](mailto:mpmay@mbcb.org),  
or call 601-968-3800 or 800-748-1651 to register

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mother's day out

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Department of Health

**Meridian, February 12**

Highland BC  
3400 27th St.  
8 a.m. registration  
12:45 Dismissal

**Madison, March 12**

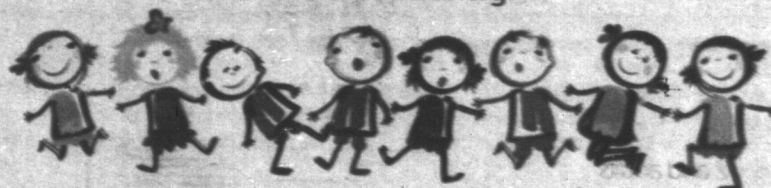
Ridgecrest BC  
7469 Old Canton Road  
8 a.m. registration  
12:45 Dismissal

### Preregistration Required Cost \$20 per conferee

Center directors accompanying teachers - FREE  
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For more info: Contact the Discipleship and Family Ministry  
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[dhicks@mbcb.org](mailto:dhicks@mbcb.org)



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THE QUEST FOR THE CHURCH CHALLENGE

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Church Music Department: 601-292-3267 or [palford@mbcb.org](mailto:palford@mbcb.org)





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**MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE**  
**CUNTON, Miss.**

**REGISTRATION BEGINS**  
**Mon., Dec. 27, 1:30 p.m.**

**CHALLENGE CONCLUDES**  
**Tue., Dec. 28, 12:30 p.m.**

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*Worship*

*John Johnson*  
*Sammy Nickolls*

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*General Convention*  
*and Utah/Idaho*  
*Southern Baptist*  
*Convention*

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### • Mail to:

Men's Ministry Department, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530  
 (Questions? Call Deanna Vail, 601-292-3335 or 1-800-748-1651)

*Pastors' Wives* If funds are available, we will send a clothing gift certificate to the pastor's wife! Often they go without things that they want or need to support their husband's ministry. This is a wonderful way to show them that they are not forgotten and that the support they provide their husband is truly appreciated.

February 25-26 Broadmoor BC Madison

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JANUARY 30 - 31

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1 THESSALONIANS 5:17

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**February 8, 2011**  
**6:30-8:30 p.m.**  
**Longview Heights BC**  
**4501 Goodman Road**  
**Olive Branch**

For more information contact Angie Boydston at aboydston@mbcb.org or  
 Lee Ann Boykin at laboykin@mbcb.org, or call 1-800-748-1651, ext. 292, or 601-292-3292

## 2011 CLM Retreat March 24-26, 2011

*"Ministry From the Heart  
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### Guest Speaker

**TERRI BLACKSTOCK** has had 25 years  
 of success as a novelist. She makes her home in  
 Mississippi, where she and her husband, Ken, are  
 enjoying their empty nest after raising three children.

Since Blackstock made her commitment to write books that glorify God,  
 He has opened door after door for her. She is excited about using her gift to  
 challenge other Christians and point unbelievers to Him.

Communications Services Department: 601-292-3378 or jchen@mbcb.org





# Cholera epidemic forces change in Baptist relief focus

**PORT-AU-PRINCE (FBC)** — In the wake of massive rainfall and extensive flooding caused by Hurricane Tomas as it skirted western Haiti, disaster-weary Haitians are now coping with an increased spread of cholera worsened by bacteria-filled standing water.

The heightened cholera outbreak has led Florida Baptist officials to focus on the potential epidemic, said Dennis Wilbanks of the state convention's partnership missions department, who traveled to the country Nov. 17, just days after Tomas' onslaught.

"It is a potential catastrophic event worthy of keeping an eye on," Wilbanks said, even as the government and NGOs efforts in water, health and sanitation have slowed the outbreak.

Haiti's Ministry of Health (MSPP) reports 1,186 deaths and 19,646 cases as of Nov. 16, the last day that analyzed figures

are available. Overall, the MSPP reports that 49,418 people have sought medical attention since the epidemic was declared.

Included in the cholera deaths are two pastors of the Confraternite Missionaire Baptiste d'Haiti (CMBH), Florida Baptists' partner convention in Haiti: Marc Edrouard Theodore of Eglise Baptiste Par la Foi K-Soleil in Gonaives, located in the Artibonite Association; and Alphonse Joseph of Eglise Baptiste Coupe-a-David in the North Association.

"It seems that the cholera actually started in the Artibonite Valley where the water flow decreases and becomes stagnant in the rice fields," Wilbanks said.

The Florida convention is working in partnership with CMBH churches to help prevent and curb the spread of the disease in the churches and their communities. The convention has allocated \$30,000 to purchase water, water purification tablets, and IV bags for churches in five CMBH associations, with the largest funding given to the Artibonite Association.

Additionally volunteers at the convention-owned mission house in Port-au-Prince will begin assembling zip-lock bags with sugar, salt and water purification tablets to distribute through the churches to needy families.

The convention staff has printed 50,000 brochures in both French Creole and English on prevention and treatment of the

disease which will be distributed through the churches, drawing on resources prepared by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.

"Education is a key ingredient in the prevention and treatment of cholera," Wilbanks said. "Prevention is most critical."

Additionally, Wilbanks said hydration is necessary to help those who have the disease to overcome it. With bags of water supplies, church members with cholera can be treated by remaining hydrated to lessen the need or treatment at overcrowded hospitals.

While in Haiti, Wilbanks heard reports and assessed damage from Hurricane Tomas. While there were "littered deaths due to the flooding, every association experienced some devastation mostly from flooding and rushing water," he said. Many new churches lost their tarp roofs.

The convention has been caring for the hunger needs in the hardest hit areas, Wilbanks reported. Rice that was previously purchased and stored in each association was released and distributed by churches to people in heavily damaged regions.

Freight containers of Buckets of Hope have been moved into the areas and currently are being distributed to families. The buckets, filled with a week's supply of food aid, were prepared by Southern Baptists in response to the Jan. 12 earthquake. Many of the containers shipped from the U.S. were



**FIGHTING A KILLER** — Baptist relief and recovery work in Haiti is aiming to lessen the onslaught of cholera in the wake of Hurricane Tomas. This Haitian mother and child were among the first families to move into a new home constructed by Florida Baptists and Southern Baptist volunteers in concert with Haiti Baptists in Croix de Bouquets. (BP photo)

held up by Haiti customs officials who were overwhelmed by the volume of humanitarian shipments after the quake.

"Our response to meet the needs of the Haitian people has been proactive," Wilbanks said. "Our food distribution is at least a week ahead of where we would have been because we had rice located through-

out the country and Buckets of Hope scheduled for distribution," he added.

Working with the area director of missions in Haiti, the Florida convention, with a continued presence of volunteers and staff in the country, will continue to keep a watchful eye on the situation, Wilbanks said.

## STAFF CHANGES

Central Church, Meridian, has called Gary Blair as pastor. He previously served Oak Forest Church, Jackson. Shown are the Blairs.



The Blairs

## COLLEGE NEWS

1. Mississippi College is having its Festival of Lights concert Dec. 2 - 4, 7:30 p.m., featuring a 70-member reunion choir for the Dec. 3 performance. Directed by James Meaders. Tickets, \$15 for adults, \$5 for students. For information and tickets, call Dottie Serio at (601) 925-3440.
2. Mark Green, physician and author of "A Night with Saddam," will be the guest speaker for William Carey University's Christian Leadership Lecture at 9:25 a.m. on December 6, in Smith Auditorium of Thomas Fine Arts Center. Green is the president and CEO of MD-Partners, an emergency department management and staffing company in Nashville, Tenn.

## OBITUARY

**Joseph Wayne Holcomb, Sr.**, died November 14 at Sanctuary Hospice House in Tupelo. He was born May 26, 1936. He was the last living offspring of George Elford Holcomb, Sr. and Omie Shempert of Pontotoc. He leaves behind his wife of 50 years, Lorene Thompson Holcomb. He is also survived by four daughters, Debra Bullard, Dinah Windham, Tabitha Walton (Kevin), Teletha Weaver (Mike) and one son, Joseph (Joey) Wayne Holcomb, Jr (Sonya); and grandchildren Kenny Bullard, Marshal Bullard (Jennifer), Cody Cayson (Melissa), Tyler Cayson, Seth Cayson, Micah Weaver, Joshua Weaver, Joseph Wayne "Jake" Holcomb III, Meagan Holcomb, Garner Holcomb, Madison Walton and Ty Walton. He also had one great grandson, Landon Weaver. Early in his ministry he was a traveling evangelist and preached in several states and held many old fashioned tent revivals. He pastored in several counties in Mississippi including Neshoba, Union, Lee, Pontotoc, Alcorn, Chickasaw, and Lauderdale. He was currently the pastor of West Mooreville Church. He founded Grace Memorial Church, Skyline, where a cornerstone bears his name. He pastored there from 1976-1996. Other survivors include a sister-in-law, Betha Holcomb, two aunts, three nieces, two nephews, and several cousins. He was preceded in death by his parents and three brothers, George Elford Holcomb Jr., David Holcomb and Jerry Holcomb. Services were held November 16 in the Tupelo Chapel of Holland Funeral Directors with Ricky Holloway, Jerry Guess, and Gary Haynes officiating. A video message of Bro. Joe was played also.

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# Prayer plan the Christmas season

## IMB 30-Day Prayer Guide for Unreached People (Fill in the blanks with individuals, people groups or nations God has put on your heart)

### Day 1 — Luke 1:11-20

An angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and overcome with fear. But the angel said to him: Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. There will be joy and delight for you, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord and will never drink wine or beer. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit while still in his mother's womb. He will turn many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God. And he will go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of fathers to their children, and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to make ready for the Lord a prepared people. "How can I know this?" Zechariah asked the angel. "For I am an old man, and my wife is well along in years." The angel answered him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and tell you this good news. Now listen! You will become silent and unable to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time." Just like Zechariah, after many disappointments it is easy to begin to believe the blessing will never come. **Pray** we will believe it is the Lord's desire to save all nations.

### Day 2 — Luke 1:21-25

Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah, amazed that he stayed so long in the sanctuary. When he did come out, he could not speak to them. Then they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept making signs to them and remained speechless. When the days of his ministry were completed, he went back home. After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived and kept herself in seclusion for five months. She said, "The Lord has done this for me. He has looked with favor in these days to take away my disgrace among the people." When the Spirit of God moves and things begin to happen, **pray** that we will remember where the blessing has come from and praise Him.

### Day 3 — Luke 1:38

"I am the Lord's slave," said Mary. "May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel left her. **Pray** that we will submit to our Father with humility and awe that He would use even us to fulfill His plans for the

### Day 4 — Luke 1:76-79

And child, you will be called a prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare His ways, to give His people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins. Because of our God's merciful compassion, the Dawn from on high will visit us to shine on those who live in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. **Pray** we will prepare the way for the Lord to enter the hearts of the

### Day 5 — Luke 2:15

When the angels had left them and returned to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go straight to Bethlehem and see what has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." **Pray** that the \_\_\_\_\_ will come to see what the Lord has done.

### Day 6 — Luke 2:17

After seeing them, they reported the message they were told about this child. **Pray** that as the \_\_\_\_\_ hear about Jesus, they will spread the Word.

### Day 7 — Luke 2:20

The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had seen and heard, just as they had been told. **Pray** that the \_\_\_\_\_ will return to their own people and neighborhoods, glorifying and praising God.

### Day 8 — Luke 3:6

"And everyone will see the salvation of God." **Pray** that all mankind will see God's salvation.

### Day 9 — Luke 3:16

John answered them all, "I baptize you with water, but One is coming who is more powerful than I. I am not worthy to untie the strap of His sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." **Pray** that the \_\_\_\_\_ will see beyond us to Jesus, who is more powerful and can baptize them with the Holy Spirit.

### Day 10 — Luke 4:14

Then Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about Him spread throughout the entire vicinity. **Pray** the news about Jesus would spread throughout the whole countryside.

### Day 11 — Luke 4:38-39

After He left the synagogue, He entered Simon's house. Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Him about her. So He stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her. She got up immediately and began to serve them. **Pray** that as the \_\_\_\_\_ are healed they will get up and begin to serve Jesus immediately.

### Day 12 — Luke 5:4-5

When He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into deep water and let down your nets for a catch." "Master," Simon replied, "we've worked hard all night long and caught nothing! But at Your word, I'll let down the nets." **Pray** that we will be obedient and "put out into deep water" whenever the Lord calls us to do so.

### Day 13 — Luke 5:6-8

When they did this, they caught a great number of fish, and their nets began to tear. So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them; they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, because I'm a sinful man, Lord!" **Pray** that when the harvest comes we will be overwhelmed with humility in the face of God's awesome blessing.

### Day 14 — Luke 5:16

Yet He often withdrew to deserted places and prayed. **Pray** that we will constantly withdraw from the crowds to listen to God's voice.

### Day 15 — Luke 5:26

Then everyone was astounded, and they were giving glory to God. And they were filled with awe and said, "We have seen incredible things today!" **Pray** that the \_\_\_\_\_ will be amazed at God's works and praise Him alone.

### Day 16 — Luke 5:27-28

After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting at the tax office, and He said to him, "Follow Me!" So, leaving everything behind, he got up and began to follow Him. **Pray** that as the \_\_\_\_\_ are called, they will get up and follow Jesus, leaving behind everything that binds them.

### Day 17 — Luke 5:34-35

Jesus said to them, "You can't make the wedding guests fast while the groom is with them, can you? But the days will come when the groom will be taken away from them — then they will fast in those days." **Pray** that God's people will fast and pray for the \_\_\_\_\_ to be saved.

### Day 18 — Luke 6:9-11

Then Jesus said to them, "I ask you: is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to destroy it?" After looking around at them all, He told him, "Stretch out your hand." He did so, and his hand was restored. They, however, were filled with rage and started discussing with one another what they might do to Jesus. **Pray** that both we and the \_\_\_\_\_ will be repentant instead of angry when our sinful attitudes are pointed out.

### Day 19 — Luke 6:35-36

But love your enemies, do [what is] good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. For He is gracious to the ungrateful and evil. Be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful. **Pray** that we will love the \_\_\_\_\_ no matter how we are treated in return.

### Day 20 — Luke 7:18-23

Then John's disciples told him about all these things. So John summoned two of his disciples and sent them to the Lord, asking, "Are You the One who is to come, or should we look for someone else?" When the men reached Him, they said, "John the Baptist sent us to ask You, 'Are You the One who is to come, or should we look for someone else?'" At that time Jesus healed many people of diseases, plagues, and evil spirits, and He granted sight to many blind people. He replied to them, "Go and report to John the things you have seen and heard: The blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with skin diseases are healed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news preached to them. And anyone who is not offended because of Me is blessed." When the Lord comes in a way we are not expecting, **pray** we will not fall away in unbelief.

### Day 21 — Luke 7:30

But since the Pharisees and experts in the law had not been baptized by him, they rejected the plan of God for themselves. **Pray** that the religious leaders among the \_\_\_\_\_ would not reject God's purposes for them.

### Day 22 — Luke 7:41-48

A creditor had two debtors. One owed 500 denarii, and the other 50. Since they could not pay it back, he graciously forgave them both. So, which of them will love him more?" Simon answered, "I suppose the one he forgave more." "You have judged correctly," He told him. Turning to the woman, He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for My feet, but she, with her tears, has washed My feet and wiped them with her hair. You gave Me no kiss, but she hasn't stopped kissing My feet since I came in. You didn't anoint My head with oil, but she has anointed My feet with fragrant oil. Therefore I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; that's why she loved much. But the one who is forgiven little, loves little." Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven." **Pray** that the \_\_\_\_\_ will have a right heart before Jesus and "love much." All the knowledge we can teach them about Jesus is worthless if it does not produce a right heart.

### Day 23 — Luke 8:15

But the seed in the good ground — these are the ones who, having heard the word with an honest and good heart, hold on to it and by enduring, bear fruit. **Pray** that both we and the \_\_\_\_\_ would with good hearts hear, retain, persevere and produce a crop.

### Day 24 — Luke 9:24

For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of Me will save it. **Pray** both we and the \_\_\_\_\_ will learn to give up our lives for Jesus so that we can find true life.

### Day 25 — Luke 9:62

But Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." **Pray** new Christians among the \_\_\_\_\_ will not turn back.

### Day 26 — Luke 10:2

He told them: "The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest." **Pray** that God will send workers from the \_\_\_\_\_ back into the harvest field.

### Day 27 — Luke 10:13

"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, sitting in sackcloth and ashes!" **Pray** that the \_\_\_\_\_ will respond to the Lord's miracles in true repentance.

### Day 28 — Luke 10:27

He answered: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself. **Pray** that the \_\_\_\_\_ will love the Lord with all their heart, soul, strength and mind.

### Day 29 — Luke 10:30-37

Jesus took up [the question] and said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him, beat him up, and fled, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down that road. When he saw him, he passed by on the other side. In the same way, a Levite, when he arrived at the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan on his journey came up to him, and when he saw [the man], he had compassion. He went over to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him. When I come back I'll reimburse you for what extra you spend.' Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" "The one who showed mercy to him," he said. Then Jesus told him, "Go and do the same." **Pray** that we will go out of our way to show mercy to the \_\_\_\_\_.

### Day 30 — Luke 10:39

She had a sister named Mary, who also sat at the Lord's feet and was listening to what He said. **Pray** that we would turn from our busy-ness and sit at the feet of Jesus. Jesus came into the world 2,000 years ago to reveal God's plan to bring all people into a right relationship with Himself. But the task is not complete until every nation and every people of every language have heard. Ask Jesus what part He desires you to play in completing the unfinished task of loving the lost.

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# HOUSE TOPS



## BIBLE STUDIES FOR LIFE

### Value What God Values

Isaiah 61:1-11

By Becky Brown

They're everywhere! You will find them in every culture: the afflicted, the brokenhearted, the exiles, the prisoners, the mourners. Good news! God is concerned about them. He has designed a grand plan to minister to their needs. He wants to use YOU to help. Our study theme for the month of December is "Change the World." The title of this week's lesson should be your first sign along the trail which leads into the very heart of your Creator. In order for the people of God to accomplish the purpose and plan of God, they must first learn to value what God values. God loves all people. God hates sin and injustice.

God gave this message to the Israelites through Moses, "The poor will never cease to be in the land; therefore I command

you, saying, 'You shall freely open your hand to your brother, to your needy and poor in your land.' (Deuteronomy 15:11 NASB). I want you to know that I pay close attention to the reflection of Old Testament prophecy in the blood red words of the pages of my New Testament. Jesus quoted this same Deuteronomy passage in Matthew 26, Mark 14 and John 12. Scripture confirms that Jesus valued what His Father values. We would do well to follow His example.

In his book *Poverty and the Kingdom of God*, Jeff Palmer, CEO of Baptist Global Response writes, "From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible is filled with the heart of God and His concern for the poor." The mission statement for their world-embracing ministry organization is, "Connecting



Brown

people in need with people who care." Do you care? Do you value who and what God values?

The prophet Isaiah lived and ministered about 750 years before the time of Christ. His message and the meaning of his name are one and the same: the Lord saves and helps. Our lesson this week comes from Isaiah 61:1-11. As we read this passage, we can hear the very heartbeat of our God Who desires to meet the needs of hurting people. In God's caring economy, real hope and meaningful change are possible. The afflicted (meek, hopeless, poor) can hear the good news. Things are looking up. The brokenhearted (crushed, wounded, disillusioned) can be tenderly cared for, wrapped, bandaged, heard and healed. Put that puny little band aide back inside the box. The exiles (captives, castaways, foreigners) receive their joyful homecoming papers. True liberty is

spelled C-H-R-I-S-T. The prisoners (incarcerated, self-enslaved, sin-sick) are unbound and set free. The door is unlocked. You can leave anytime. The mourners (grief-stricken, devastated, tear stained) shall find complete consolation. They will soon have a reason to sing for joy.

As people belonging to God our Father, we have the high privilege and the grave responsibility of looking upward to Him for direction. God loves hurting people. We must also look backward to the example of God the Son during His earthly ministry. Jesus tenderly cared for the spiritually dead and the physically wounded. We also have the joy of looking inward to find God the Holy Spirit dwelling in our hearts to give the power and gifts we need to minister. The Holy Spirit wants to help us show love from God through us to others. Jesus loved that way. Then, with firm purpose and deep desire to value what God values, we will look outward to the needs of those in our sphere

of influence. Start where you are. Take to heart these words from the book of James, "If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,' and yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that?" (James 2:15-16 NASB).

Jesus used our passage from Isaiah 61 as the text for his message in His hometown of Nazareth. He claimed rightfully to be the living, breathing fulfillment of these 750 year old verses. In Luke 4, we read that His friends and neighbors were amazed at His teaching and His words. For those who repent and return, God will raise up, rebuild, repair, restore and renew. Everlasting joy can be theirs. That day, those hometown folks rejected His message and even sought to take His life by throwing Him off the nearest cliff. Will we refuse to hear Him, too?

Brown is staff evangelist at First Church, Richland.

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

### What Money Can't Buy

1 Kings 3:3-15

By Dr. W. Wayne VanHorn

You don't have to live very long in America before you get the impression that life is all about money. News of unemployment, national deficits, bankruptcy, layoffs, budget shortfalls, and cutbacks remind us daily of the power of money. Nightly news always has a stock market report. Hollywood stars dress lavishly in an effort to display their wealth and fame. Multi-million dollar contracts of professional athletes entice thousands of young people to make sports stars their idols. Reminders about money are all around us, but is money really the most important thing in life?

This week's lesson is about something money can't buy. The lesson is set against the backdrop of young King Solomon worshipping the Lord. Solomon's father, David, had

advised his young son from his deathbed, to be strong and brave, and most importantly, to keep his obligations to the Lord (1 Kings 2:2-4).

Solomon travelled to the most prestigious worship place outside of Jerusalem, Gibeon, to worship the Lord. While there, the Lord appeared to him in a dream and told the young king to ask whatever he wanted God to give him (1 Kings 3:5).

In response, Solomon acknowledged the long standing work of God in the life of his father and in his own life. He humbly admitted his inability to rule over the covenant people, referring to himself as a "youth" (HCSB; 3:7). Nonetheless, he made a wise request of God, a request for "an obedient heart" to govern God's covenant people (HCSB; 3:9). Then Solomon would be able to discern between good



VanHorn

and evil, between what pleased the Lord and what displeased Him. Wait! I thought money was the key to happiness, power, success, and control. Right? Wrong! Solomon never asked for money. He asked for the very thing money can't buy, a spirit sensitized to the Lord's leadership.

The Lord was pleased with Solomon's request for an understanding mind to judge His people and to discern between good and evil. Properly understood, good and evil are theological terms referring to those things God has prescribed as pleasing to Him (good) or conversely to those things that draw us away from Him (evil). Ultimately, success in life is determined by our faithfulness to the Lord. The more we do good, as defined by God, the closer we are to Him and the more successful we are in His judgment. When we choose to do things that take us away from His presence, engaging

in activity He has defined as evil, we make ourselves the biggest losers. Solomon knew he needed the capacity to discern good and evil if he wanted to rule effectively.

In addition to being pleased with Solomon's request, the Lord took note of the things Solomon did not ask for: long life, riches, and the life of his enemies. We should note that a king seeking to consolidate his power, could logically request longevity, riches, and the downfall of his enemies. Yet, these three requests have in common that all three potentially leave God out of the equation. Even in his youth, Solomon recognized, probably due to David's influence, the central importance of following the Lord's direction. From the outset of his reign, he requested the Lord to empower him with an understanding mind to discern good and evil. In this way, Solomon could have assurance of making wise decisions in all areas of his influence.

Whom do you seek to please? You please the Lord when you value living with

godly wisdom more than pursuing personal wealth and attainments. God is free to bless us in any manner He chooses. When we try to take matters into our own hands, we become inwardly focused and selfish. We seek the very things we think money can buy. Acquiring more money so we can acquire more things becomes our path through life. In the process we forfeit the joy and peace attained through obedience to the Lord.

In my pilgrimage, I have found myself at times in the desert of disobedience as a result of straying from the Lord. Conversely, at other times I have experienced the joy of knowing I was precisely where God wanted me, and experiencing the peace that comes with being there. My prayer is that we, like young Solomon, will ask for an understanding mind to discern good and evil. I am confident God will hear our prayers and grant our requests.

Van Horn is Dean of Christian Studies and the Arts at Mississippi College.

## Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

# THE BAPTIST Record

Please make articles concise. Include the who, what, when, where details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if

submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted. Cell phone photographs and other low resolution items are generally not publishable. Photographs can not be returned. Please do not attach photos with tape or staples.

All news items are subject to editing, and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape, building, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. News items and/or photographs depicting benefits and activities for secular or outside organizations will not be published. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.



# Condemned Christian pardoned by Pakistan president

WASHINGTON (BP) — A Christian woman sentenced to death for blasphemy has been pardoned by Pakistan's president, according to a Nov. 22 report by International Christian Concern (ICC), a human rights organization based in Washington.

Asia Noreen, also named as Asia Bibi by ICC and various media, was sentenced Nov. 8

after a court in Pakistan's Punjab province found her guilty of blasphemous statements against Islam's prophet Muhammad. Under Pakistan's blasphemy law, it is a crime punishable by death to blaspheme the Islamic prophet.

ICC stated that Noreen's release "came after intense international pressure by politicians and church leaders as well as coverage by several media outlets."

ICC stated that Noreen "has now been taken to an undisclosed location for her safety. In the past, Christians have been killed by vigilantes after being accused of blasphemy. On July 19, gunmen killed pastor Rashid Emmanuel and his brother Sajid Emmanuel while police were transporting them from the court in Faisalabad to jail."

ICC reported that Muslim lawyers "and other fundamentalist Muslims" are preparing to demonstrate against Noreen's release. Jonathan Racho, ICC regional manager for southern Asia, commended Pakistan's president, Asif Ali Zardari, "for taking the right action."

"It's high time for Pakistan to repeal the blasphemy laws that have caused so much persecution against

Christians and other religious minorities," Racho said.

Meanwhile, police suspect two Muslim extremists shot a Christian to death in Pakistan's Punjab province shortly after the victim was granted bail in another blasphemy case — and less than a week after Islamist militants killed four members of a Christian family for their faith in the same province, Compass Direct News reported Nov. 22.

Latif Masih, 22, died after two men with pistols shot him near his home in Godhpur, a village 111 kilometers (69 miles) northeast of Lahore. Inspector Rafique Ahmed said Masih's murder was likely linked to the case against him for allegedly desecrating the Quran, Compass reported, quoting him as saying, "No Muslim tolerates a man who commits blasphemous acts."

Masih, a Presbyterian church member, has spent five months in jail after being accused of burning pages of the Quran in a case registered last June at the village police station. He was released on bail Nov. 3 after the complainant in the case, Ijaz Ahmed, told the court he was not sure that Masih was guilty, police said, according to Compass.



**PARDONED** — Asia Noreen (center), a Pakistani Christian sentenced to death for allegedly insulting Islam prophet Muhammad, visits with her young daughters before being returned to jail after a court hearing. Noreen was pardoned by the country's president, but cases of religious persecution persist in the predominantly Muslim country. (BP photo)

Masih's mother Rubina Bibi, 60, said two men armed with pistols knocked at the door of their house on Thursday, Nov. 18, and asked him to accompany them. "A few yards from the house, they suddenly opened fire," she said, telling Compass that Masih was shot five times.

The woman reported the attackers fled by motorbike.

"There were policemen present in the street, but no one tried to stop them," Bibi pointed out.

Junaid Masih, the victim's brother, said Latif Masih was innocent of the blasphemy charge. He said that Ahmed had filed the charge because he was trying to take possession of Latif's shop.

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# Christmas ad campaign rankles British pro-abortionists

WASHINGTON (BP) — An advertising campaign designed to help people focus on Christ at Christmas will portray an ultrasound scan of the Son of God in His mother's womb on British billboards in December, despite criticism that it promotes an anti-abortion message.

The advertisement shows a sonogram image of an unborn child with a halo around his head. The message at the top of the ad says, "He's on His way," while the text at the bottom reads, "Christmas starts with Christ."

Promoters of Baby Scan Jesus, as they have named the ad, hope it will reach 40 million people from more than 2,000 billboard and poster sites Dec. 6-20 in England, according to the Guardian, a British newspaper.

A critic called the ad incredibly naïve. "The image is too specifically associated with pro-lifers to be seen in a benign context. They should go back to angels and cribs," said Terry Sanderson, director of the National Secular Society, the Guardian reported in June in one of its stories about the ad.

Trustees for ChurchAds.net, the ecumenical charity behind the campaign, said the ad "is not, in any way, designed to either support or campaign against abortion." The poster "announces the imminent birth of the Christ child in the

way that many modern-day parents choose to announce the coming birth of their own child," they said in a written statement.

A British pro-life leader, however, saw the ad as a "wonderful help in changing people's minds in the abortion issue. This is not a cluster of cells but a human person and it just happens to be the God man Jesus... That is a very, very powerful statement that will strike a chord with the general population," said John Smeaton of the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children, according to the Guardian.

Jonathan Edwards, general secretary of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, commended the ad: "The picture of a scan is one of the most defining moments of a pregnancy these days — it's full of promise and anticipation. I'm delighted to see this year's Christmas advert and pray it will encourage many people to sit up and take note of the Christmas message."

Meanwhile in America, LeRoy Carhart plans to take his late-term abortion business to other states after a new Nebraska law banning the procedure at 20 weeks of pregnancy took effect.

Carhart of Bellevue, Neb., told the Omaha World-Herald he plans to begin providing late-term abortions at new clinics in the Washington, D.C., area and Council Bluffs,

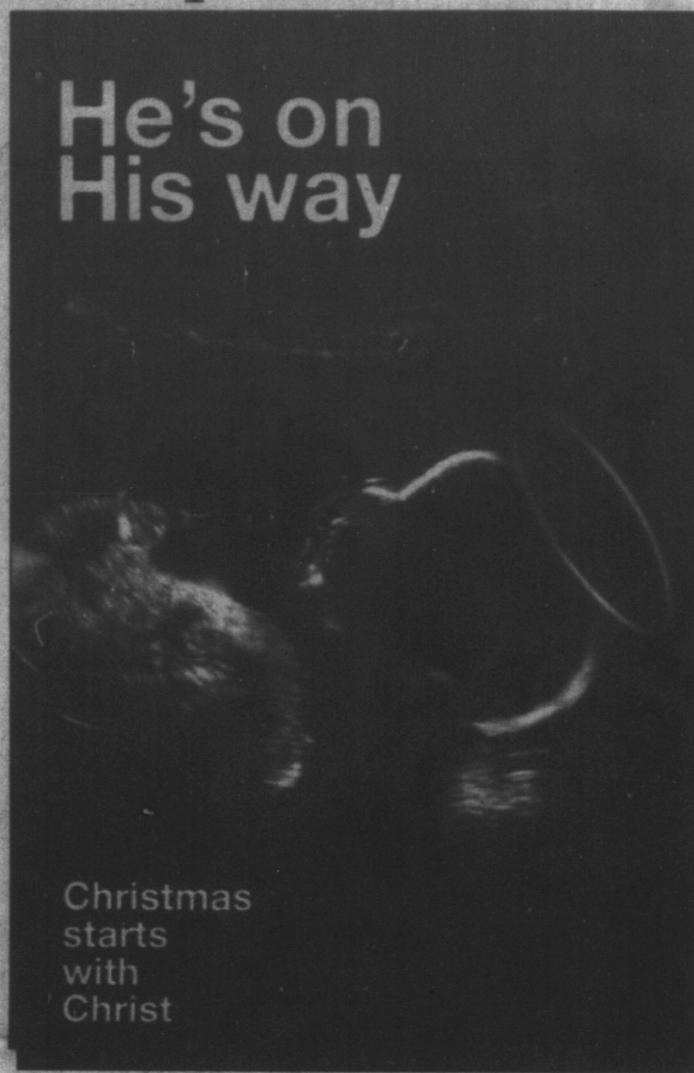
Iowa. He also plans to expand an abortion facility in Indianapolis.

Carhart told The Washington Post, "The laws are more favorable in these other jurisdictions, and we're going to do the maximum the law allows."

The new Nebraska law — the Pain-capable Unborn Child Protection Act that took effect Oct. 15 — establishes a new standard in abortion bans. Rather than setting the benchmark at fetal viability, which can be 22-24 weeks, Nebraska's law utilizes evidence that an unborn child experiences pain at 20 weeks for its guideline.

Julie Schmit-Albin, executive director of Nebraska Right to Life, said Carhart's move to other states demonstrates the effectiveness of the new law. "It's interesting to us that Carhart needed to expand to three other states to apply his late-term abortion trend," she said, according to the World-Herald.

In another development, Planned Parenthood Federation of America, the country's leading provider of abortions, continues to be in the news, often in a negative light. According to recent reports, Planned Parenthood of the Inland Northwest agreed to pay \$345,000 to the state of Washington in a settlement regarding claims the organization had billed to Medicaid.



## JUST FOR THE RECORD

1. The children and youth of Mt. Olivet Church, Scott County, recently conducted an entire Sunday evening worship service. Shown are some of the participants. Bruce Robinson, pastor.
2. Little Bahala Church, Wesson, held a baby dedication Nov. 21. Shown are pastor Douglas Clark; Mark & Misty Sanders with

Madelyn Sanders; Julie Caballero holding Anna Frances Caballero; and Julie & Toby Williamson with Shelby Williamson.

3. Cleary Church, Florence, will host Topherman on their Christmas Carols & Eggnog Tour with local special guests Dec. 17, 7-8 p.m. Free.

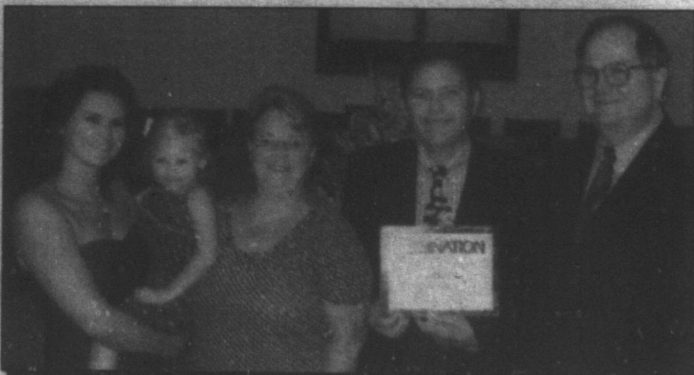
4. Ellistown Church, Ellistown, held a special service, led by pastor Mike Powell, to answer children's questions about baptism, the Lord's Supper, salvation, and other questions children have about becoming a Christian. Powell walked the children around the church barefooted so they might understand how tiring and rough it must have been for Christ. Powell washed the children's feet as Jesus washed the disciples' feet.

5. Leaf River Church, Pineville Community, is having a senior citizens' Christmas covered dish luncheon Dec. 16, 11 a.m.

6. Calvary Church, Greenwood, ordained Robert Browning as deacon Sept. 19. Shown are Jill Roberts (daughter), Mary Alyssa (grandaughter), Mary Ann Browning (wife), Browning, and pastor Wayne Kimbrough.



2. Little Bahala Church, Wesson



6. Browning ordination



1. Mt. Olivet Church, Scott County